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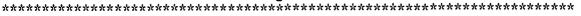   Student Relationship; Teaching Methods
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ABSTRACT .
        The concept of caring, especially when applied to
adolescents, is often overlooked in education, perhaps due to the
belief that parents are their primary nurturers or that adolescents
do not require nurturing. This literature review examines
periodicals, documents, books, and a television broadcast, all
produced between 1990 and 1996, that deal with caring strategies in
relation to middle and secondary students. Major findings are
presented in the following categories: (1) need for implementing
concepts of care; (2) historical perspective; (3) fostering care by
nurturing adolescent development; (4) care versus control, or care is
control?; (5) fostering relationships--the administrator role, the
teacher role, the student role, and parental involvement; (6) care
and academic achievement; (7) care and curriculum integration; (8)
caring programs; and (9) schools and social service collaboration.
The conclusion summarizes several of its findings, such as students'
need for support systems and training in interpersonal skills, the
importance of high expectations for students' performance, and the
need for partnerships with parents and communities. Contains 30
references. (EV)

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A Comprehensive Literature Review in Valuing the Concept of Caring in Middle and Secondary Level Schools

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Education S591: Exit Research Project in Secondary Education

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I. INTRODUCTION

TOPIC: This study reviews periodical literature, documents, and books published from 1990 to 1996 in addition to one television broadcast which define, defend, and examine the need for understanding and implementing the concept of caring strategies which positively influence middle and secondary students' emotional, social, psychological, and cognitive development in our schools.

STUDY PURPOSE: This topic is important to me because I strongly advocate the necessity of building trusting relationships as well as fostering mutual care and respect in student/teacher, student/student, and parent/school relationships. Possessing the ability to acknowledge the powerfulness of perceiving school environments as caring communities and to identify the importance of building trustworthy interpersonal relationships have greatly contributed to my success as an educator. I am thrilled this topic and its impact on human learning and developmental processes are finally receiving scholarly examination which merit the importance of including daily, classroom approaches and opportunities in the practice of caring.

There are countless methods in which the concept of caring can be valued and communicated within the school setting. These approaches, which are addressed in this study, do not require a lot of time, effort, nor money, but their positive effects can richly fulfill students' needs which directly enhance their chances for success in both their personal life experiences and their educational endeavors.

My professional experiences as an educator and social worker have provided me with the opportunity to gain insightful observations which reinforce my belief in the need to address the inclusion of fostering the concept of caring within school settings. My current employment at a social service agency promoting self-sufficiency for low-income families offers me daily exposure to familial situations which continue to elevate my awareness and belief in the need for educators to embrace the challenge of examining the concept of caring and its positive effects it has on relationships and educational outcomes.

The concept of being caring, especially when applied to adolescents, is often overlooked in education. This oversight is due to the belief that students' parents are the primary caregivers or nurturers of their children's emotional well-being. Some insensitive, misinformed educators perceive early and middle adolescent students as miniature adults who do not require nurturing. In addition, these educators believe that making interpersonal connections with their students' personal interests, needs, and families is not necessary in addressing their educational needs. Some neglect to show caring behavior because they feel this conflicts with their personal and professional expectations as an educator.

Another reason this topic deserves attention can be attributed to increasing numbers of at risk students, many of whom come from low-income, non-traditional families, who require more support systems consisting of adult role models whom they can trust. In today's economically and emotionally demanding world coupled with frighteningly increasing violence, crime, poverty, child abuse, substance abuse, teenage pregnancy, and school drop-out rates, an alarming number of families are depending more on schools to provide safe, emotional support systems and guidance for their children as well as for themselves. A non-judgmental attempt to explore and understand a student's background and those barriers his or her family struggles to overcome greatly increases an educator's

ability to assess those causes which attribute to that student's behavior and academic performance.

Perhaps the most important reason of all to study the promotion of the concept of caring in middle and secondary schools, or for any school, is because the traditional concept of controlling students is not preparing them for their adult lives. It is time educational reform policies concentrate less on academic progress and reactive measures, and more on relational development and proactive steps to abolish contemporary shortcomings in education. Policy makers should not dismiss the importance of addressing the social and emotional needs of students. Continued funding and support of preventive and responsive programs, like advisor/advisee programs which address age-appropriate developmental issues that are not academically related, are becoming necessary components in turning classrooms into caring environments.

In the this study, I unfold the significant role which caring, supportive relationships and approaches play in adolescents' lives. I show the impact this support has on the learning process, and I provide information which stresses the importance of addressing the student as a whole person whose development and perception of himself/herself and others is greatly influenced by teachers and administrators with whom he interacts in a school setting. I share gathered suggestions which are helpful in promoting and implementing inexpensive support programs assisting educators in making personal connections which convey care to their students and their families. Approaches in building students' interpersonal relationship skills will also be discussed. Some of these approaches can be incorporating into curricula, and others are non-curricula related. Information uncovered about schools collaborating with other service-related institutions to best serve the needs of students and their families is included. Attitudes toward schools serving a support system/social service role will be addressed.

LIMITATIONS: The availability of data pertaining to the practice of secondary level caring approaches is more limited compared to the amount of available information on middle school practices of caring. More literature is available for the middle school level because of all the publications discussing the middle school concept and the identity confusion associated with early adolescence. Also, it appears the promotion of prosocial skills is limited at the high school level due to the intense focus on academics.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

advisor-advisee (advisory) programs-regularly scheduled times during which each
student has the opportunity to interact with peers and/or
teachers in relation to school oriented and personal concerns;
provides students with at least one adult that knows them well
and offers the possibility of a close and trusting relationship
with an adult. (Whisler 25)

altruism-the principle or practice of unselfish concern for the welfare of others.
(Kohn 499)

antisocial behavior-negative behaviors including selfishness, competitiveness, laziness,
aggressiveness, apathy, irresponsibility, etc. (Kohn 488)

block schedule-scheduling which provides large blocks of time for teams of teachers
or self-contained teachers to arrange flexible grouping of
students for various periods at a time to provide appropriate learning
experiences. (Whisler 24)

caring-a belief about how humans should view and interact with others. (Noblit, Rogers,
McCadden 680)

caring communities-schools and classrooms in which every student feels connected to
others, involved in decision-making, and valued as an individual
feeling a shared sense of purpose. (Montgomery 10)

cooperative learning-a concept in which students are put in pairs or small groups to help
one another learn; the promotion of students working together and
prosocially interacting to avoid the unnecessary pressures of
competition and the isolation of learning individually. (Kohn 503)

developmental discipline-an approach to classroom management in which students are
given an active role in classroom governance with the
assistance of teacher guidance, not dictation. (Soloman 386)

exploratory programs-regularly scheduled experiences in which students are
encouraged to investigate and experience new categories of
skills and knowledge (usually non-academic or non-achievement
oriented) to pursue special interest. (Whisler 26)

interpersonal interaction patterns-prescriptions for the appropriate attitudes, verbal responses, and gestures that are viewed as acceptable in certain social situations. (Kinsler and Joyner 177)

MSALT-The Michigan Study of Adolescent Life Transitions which provides evidence that educational environments need to satisfy needs of students' developmental stages. (Eccles 95)

moral authority-responsible, ethical use of control (Noblit 26)

moral imagination (empathetic imagination)-the ability to care and feel emotion from impact of a literary character's experiences or destiny. (Gillespie 17)

perspective taking-the ability to assume another person's viewpoint and understand his or her thoughts and feelings. (Kohn 500)

person-environment fit theory-behavior, motivation, and mental health are influenced by the fit between the characteristics individuals bring to their social environments and the characteristics of these social environments. (Eccles 91)

prosocial behavior and values-caring about, empathizing with, and helping others. (Kohn 498)

SDP-School Development Program developed by Dr. James Comer at the Yale Child Study Center. (Kinsler and Joyner 175)

technical dimensions (features)-instructional techniques, discipline methods, classroom management, and the other pedagogical aspects of classroom organization. (Noblit, Rogers, McCadden 680)

youth culture-a social phenomenon reflecting profound alienation from adult society accompanied with feelings of despair, nihilism, and idealism. (Marshak 31)

II. DISCUSSION OF MAJOR FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Need for Implementing Concepts of Care in Schools

As the end of this century approaches, societal cataclysm and its negative effects continue to seep into our school systems. Today's adolescents are confronted with risks that were non-existent in their parents' and grandparents' youth. Conditions of adolescence have undergone dramatic changes. Increasing numbers of young people feel forced to comply with negative peer pressure to alleviate the stressors forced upon them on a daily basis. Engaging in drug and alcohol usage, participating in criminal and violent acts, practicing in promiscuous behaviors, and choosing to quit school are coping methods teenagers use to control the uncontrollable factors in their young lives. These often include the instability and uncertainties they may experience from societal violence and crime, changing family structures, increasing poverty levels, and decreasing adult role models available to them for guidance. During the adolescent stage of development, young people are "particularly impressionable, malleable, and open" to these negative influences (Whisler 3). At a tender young age, they are learning not to be tender through rampant selfishness and competition (Kohn 498). Sawyer reports a 124% increase in homicides committed by youth in 1995 (Teaching Kids...). According to Noddings, teen pregnancy, suicide, and drunk driving accidents have also increased dramatically in the past decade (Challenge to Care Intro. xiv).

Some families possess the necessary skills and resources to provide emotional and social support systems to assist their adolescent children in coping or solving stressful situations; however, many teenagers come from families that live in impoverished conditions creating major economical and social barriers which cause them to be less likely to have supports at home or even at school. These teenagers, who are considered at-risk due to their familial and low-income backgrounds, experience "lives that are marked with discontinuity and fragmentation" due to scarce material resources resulting from their

families' poverty limiting the time, effort, and energy their parents are able to invest in their emotional, social, psychological, and academic needs. (Newberg 713).

The 1989 Carnegie Council publication urges educators to value the period of adolescence because it is the last critical stage in human development in which a positive impact can be made to help young people develop into the adults they are "capable of becoming" (Whisler 13). Also urging administrators and educators to respond, Whisler maintains that teenagers "are in trouble because the world around them has changed irrevocably while the schools have not" (Whisler 4). The need for educational restructuring of schools to promote caring is being addressed by implementation of a relational focus which is beginning to help shift the "culture of schooling" (Noblit, Rogers and McCadden 680). Noddings asserts that schools need to be organized to provide "continuity and support for relationships of care and trust," so that teachers and parents can foster multidimensional growth in students through cooperation, sharing, attention, and nurturing ("Teaching Themes" 676). She points to the importance of caring for students and their families because it serves as a "connection or encounter" which satisfies a need shared among all humans. She defines caring as a relationship, not a set of specific behaviors, in which both parties "feel something toward the other," and "recognition and response must be present in order for a caring relationship to be complete" (Challenge to Care 16-17). Kohn believes school environments serve as ideal places to guide adolescents toward practices in prosocial behaviors because it is where learning is expected to occur, and students have the opportunity to engage in interactions with their peers on a daily basis (499).

In addition to promoting caring, trusting relationships, the concept of care is essential to education because it guides the manner in which schools view instruction, communication, discipline, assessment, governance, and organization. Noblit and his colleagues find that technical dimensions of classrooms are based on the foundation of

caring, yet caring becomes lost because these technical aspects of teaching tend "to dominate our thinking about what makes schools and classrooms good" (680). Researchers are responding to this loss of care in the classroom by transforming their agendas from a preoccupation with cognitive processes, subject matter knowledge, and classroom management to those consisting of moral dimension models (Clark and Jensen 432). Whisler agrees with this shift in educational agenda by advocating an that an educator's responsibility is to promote the development of student "attitudes, character, and values" because "the ultimate objective of education lies in behaviors," and behaviors result from attitudes, not information presented in a didactic manner (20).

Historical Perspective

What caused our school systems to shift their focus from caring about people to caring more about the technical aspects of education? To understand this gradual process, one must examine the historical ramifications which have occurred in the past century. Many educators and parents, who look to nostalgia for cures to modern educational ills, fondly regard "the sense of community cultivated in the fabled one-room schoolhouse with little money and less regulation before the rise of the large, departmentalized modern high school" came into existence (Montgomery 4). Montgomery reports that many yearn for the little schoolhouse of previous generations because it offered an atmosphere "of caring and responsibility deeply rooted in the values of the surrounding community" in addition to expecting students to develop the academic skills and personal commitments to become a decent, productive citizen (4). Although this scenario appears quite picturesque, the demographic, economic, societal, and familial structures at the turn-of-the-century were quite different than those we are facing at the end of the 20th century.

In his historical review of education, Marshak examines school enrollment changes during each decade from 1900 to 1960. In 1900, only ten percent of fourteen to seventeen year olds were enrolled in school. Most teenagers at this time

worked on farms, in factories, or for family businesses. Only thirty-nine percent of the population lived in urban areas. Youth culture did not exist at this point because young people were deeply integrated into adult roles throughout society (Marshak 31). This integration provided natural connections to adult role models.

Youth culture began to emerge in the 1920's when at least fifty percent of American teenagers were enrolled in school. Affluent white youths began listening to jazz, drinking alcohol, smoking marijuana, and accessing mobility from a technological discovery known as the automobile. However, youth culture, resulting from engagement in these behaviors, was short-lived due to World War II causing a sudden halt to this alienation by pulling youth back into adult society out of necessity (Marshak 31).

During the 1930's and 1940's, youth culture struggled to exist through some teens' focus on music, slang, and clothing styles; however, the demands of wartime efforts kept teenagers occupied with responsibilities and the effects of youth culture at a minimum. Seventy-three percent of all teens were enrolled in school at this time, and urban population increased to fifty-six percent (Marshak 31).

Post-war times brought the rebirth of youth culture as we know it today. School enrollment for teens increased to seventy-six percent, and sixty-four percent of the population lived in urban locations in the 1950's. The following major changes were occurring at this time: increased urbanization, affluence resulting from the war, technological advancements, and consolidation of small high schools. Migration to cities caused teenagers to lose their "sense of community and consistent relationships with adults other than their parents." Prosperity, resulting from the war, allowed middle-class families to provide their teenagers with material resources. Teenagers were no longer expected to contribute to their family's income; therefore, they were able to pursue and finance their own interests, which differed from their parents' interests, separating them as an individual. Technological advances, like the transistor radio and television, allowed teens to

"connect" with other teens, making them less dependent on their own families for emotional and social support (Marshak 32). Television introduced a "foreign" range of models and values to which teens had not previously been exposed. They began to search outside of their immediate circle of role models, like close family and community members, for "standards and models of behavior" (Whisler 4). Finally, school consolidations, which first occurred in 1959, were responsible for "the destruction of the small high school and the dumping of millions of baby-boom teens into larger, more impersonal schools through which most people passed for three or four years without forming any significant relationships with any adults" (Marshak 31-32). This latter occurrence has negatively impacted the manner in which educators have been allowed to care for their students.

Marshak elaborates on the reasons for the organizational restructuring known as school consolidation. He refers to a report entitled, "The American High School Today," published in 1959 by James Bryant Conant (31). Conant urged schools to consolidate to enable them "to offer a diversified and comprehensive curriculum at an affordable price" (Marshak 31). Conant's appeal for larger enrollment numbers to gain more dollars in order to focus on mathematics and science department expansions quickly gathered public support due to the "'Sputnik' advancements," thus many school systems chose to unify and rapidly gained size and dollars; however, they did not heed all of Conant's educational restructuring recommendations, and as a result, many students became lost in the consolidation shuffle and felt forced to turn to the supports of peers rather than adults. Thus, youth culture flourished and was here to stay (Marshak 32).

To illustrate the reality of the disappearance of small learning communities as a result of increased enrollment figures and consolidation, Marshak compares 1958 and 1990 graduating class figures. In 1958, four thousand American high school seniors were enrolled in graduating classes of more than one hundred students, and seventeen thousand

were enrolled in schools with fewer than one hundred students. However, in 1990 there were twelve thousand high schools with graduating classes of more than one hundred students and eight thousand high schools with graduating classes of fewer than one hundred students (Marshak 32). To illustrate this point even further, Marshak's research reveals that in 1990, eighty-nine percent of all high school students were enrolled in high schools with more than one hundred graduating students, and sixty-four percent were enrolled in high schools with more than eight hundred graduating students (32). Obviously, Conant did not foresee the consequences of his restructuring plan to increase funds for curricula development when he encouraged it more than thirty years ago! The impact on school size and classroom numbers continues to present a problem preventing educators to build necessary interpersonal relationships and nurture the healthful development of their students.

Fostering Care by Nurturing Adolescent Development

Educators need to recognize the importance of providing a caring climate to foster the social, psycho-emotional, physical, cognitive, and moral growth of young people. Adolescence is characterized by numerous changes occurring rapidly at various levels. These changes are due to "pubertal development, social role redefinitions, cognitive development, school transitions, and the emergence of sexuality" (Eccles et al. 90). Rethinking the way educators need to interact with students experiencing the effects of adolescence is paramount in addressing their many needs. The 1989 Carnegie Council reports on the need to incorporate caring in the classroom:

> Caring is crucial to the development of young adolescents into adults. Young adolescents need to see themselves as valued members of a group that offers mutual support and trusting relationships. They need to be able to succeed at something, and to be praised and rewarded for that success. They need to become socially competent individuals who have the skills to cope successfully with exigencies of everyday life. They need to believe that they have a promising future, and they need the competence to take advantage of real opportunities in a society

in which they have a stake (Whisler 14).

Educators must be aware of the importance of social and psychological interventions which must be considered during the adolescent years. To be effective, they need to understand this age level and be willing and able to offer the "support and guidance" young people need to cope with the confusion struggles and conflict presented with the transitions caused by adolescence (Whisler 20).

Eccles and her colleagues' research indicates that significant decreases in some early adolescent students' motivation, self-perceptions, confidence, and academic achievement; and increases in test anxiety, hopelessness, and truancy/drop-out rates are not uncommon adolescent characteristics (90). Child development and behavioral scientists contend that these declines in positive traits and increases in negative traits result from "the parallel timing of intraphysical upheaval and multiple life changes" which adolescent students encounter during difficult transitions to middle and high school (Eccles et al. 90). These transitions to different school environments can be detrimental because they often impose "competition, social comparison, and ability self-assessment" at a time when self-awareness is at its very peak (Eccles et al. 94). When entering some middle or high school environments, students are faced with limited choices and control, lower level cognitive expectations, and restricted opportunities for developing interpersonal connections. These school environments are contrary to the adolescent student's need for autonomy and control, ability to perform higher level cognitive tasks, and desire to interact with peers as well as significant adults (Eccles et al. 94).

Eccles and her colleagues suggest the need to alleviate the negative aspects of transitioning by avoiding the "mismatch between the needs of developing adolescents and the opportunities afforded them by their social environments" (90). They advocate a "person-environment" or "stage-environment" theory which involves adapting classroom operations to the student's developmental characteristics (92). Findings gathered from the

Michigan Study of Adolescent Life Transitions suggest these possible classroom strategies to best address adolescent needs: decreasing class sizes, improving teacher/student relationships, involving students in decision-making, implementing small learning groups, individualizing instruction, encouraging independence, decreasing competitiveness, increasing higher-order cognitive challenges, re-examining assessment methods, avoiding ability grouping, and recognizing and responding to various student maturity levels (Eccles et al. 92-99).

Behavioral scientists urge educators to appreciate the following multidimensional "developmental pathways" which allow insight into the intricacies of their students' developmental processes: "physical, psycho-emotional, social interactive, speech and language, cognitive-intellectual, and moral-ethical" (Kinsler and Joyner 176). Dr. James Comer, creator of a restructuring plan called the "Social Development Program," appeals to educators to consider the various individual pathways of a student instead of only focusing on the sum of these pathways representing the whole child (Kinsler and Joyner 176). Educators need to monitor a student's physical pathway to ensure his or her basic needs, like nutrition, shelter, sleep, etc., are being met. If these basic needs are not being satisfied, "the physical distress that results will cause the student to be disinclined to focus on classroom learning" (Kinsler and Joyner 176). A student's psycho-emotional pathway must be addressed by providing an environment that nurtures their sense of identity. Teachers must be willing to instill in students a positive regard for self and a belief in their ability to contribute productively to their environments. The social-interactive dimension of students needs to be shaped through consistently offering practice in productive interpersonal relationships. Educators need to be positive role models by demonstrating an encouraging positive interactions among students. The speech and language developmental dimension, representing knowledge and the exchange of information on an interpersonal and intrapersonal level, must be shaped, yet it is important for teachers to

respect various dialects of standard English language which are part of their students'

cultural heritage. Dr. Comer cautions against viewing dialect differences as

communication delays or perceiving them as inferior (Kinsler and Joyner 178).

Celebrating cultural dialects should be encouraged. Placing high expectations on students

and believing in their capacity to reason are important components in nurturing their

cognitive-intellectual development. Making instruction "applicable and developmentally

appropriate" to students' life experiences is necessary in fostering this developmental

dimension (Kinsler and Joyner 178). The final piece to consider in adolescent

development is the moral-ethical pathway. Some families responsibly instill the necessary

values assisting students in making moral decisions; however, not all families impart values

which help adolescents live their lives according to acceptable, ethical standards.

Although teachers should not impose their moral beliefs onto their students, they should

provide opportunities in allowing students to empathize with others and build tolerance

and understanding for other points of view. Again, emphasis and prioritization of values

and belief systems will vary according to family background and cultural heritage. Some

student behaviors "that may be viewed as acceptable in one context may be viewed by

teachers as morally or ethically wrong" (Kinsler and Joyner 178). To illustrate this point,

Kinsler and Joyner assert that "the collaborative learning style traditional for many

African-Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans may lead to classroom behavior

regarded by some teachers as "cheating" (178). Caring educators must be aware of these

differences and be willing to adapt to them.

Care vs. Control or Care is Control?

Thomas Gordon, author of Teaching Children Self-Discipline, states, "The more you

use power to try to control people, the less real influence you will have on their lives"

(Kohn 500). Clark and Jensen agree with Gordon by contending that "tactics of control,

punishment, denial, and exclusion," which were acceptable, yet "superficially

effective" classroom management techniques used by educators some thirty to fifty years ago, should now be viewed as "immoral, illegal, and ineffective" by teachers who advocate caring communities within schools (431). Kohn defends their contention by examining social learning theory which shows that punishment teaches students to be "punitive, resistant, and resentful" (Kohn 500). His research shows that punishments only teach about what students are not to do instead of teaching them what they are to do. He encourages teachers not to rely on punishment because a student's "attention is not really focused on the intended lesson, much less on the rationale for this principle, but primarily on the punishment itself" (Kohn 500).

Bribing is another interaction educators need to avoid if they want to foster a caring community. Kohn maintains that while bribing through the use of extrinsic rewards may motivate, it does nothing in nurturing a student's commitment to showing generosity and respect for others (501). Providing extrinsic motivators "undermines intrinsic motivation reducing a student's interest in displaying prosocial behaviors" (Kohn 501). Kohn discourages the use of extrinsic rewards or bribery to get students to care about others by citing the following:

> Many well -meaning teachers continue to assume that
> what works for training the family pet must be appropriate
> for shaping children's actions and values as well....[Rewards]
> encourage ego involvement over task involvement lessening
> the importance of the task....when someone is rewarded for
> prosocial behavior, that person will tend to assume that the
> reward accounts for his or her actions, and thus will be less
> likely to help when no one is around to provide a reward (501).

Instead of forcing students to adopt prosocial behaviors through manipulative controls like punishment and bribery, educators need to help students "internalize the values underlying the desired prosocial behaviors" (Kohn 501). A 1985 study conducted by Deci and Ryan found that educators were more successful at promoting intrinsic motivation

resulting in students' prosocial behaviors when their philosophy of control included allowing students to participate in decision-making and problem-solving of classroom social and academic issues which gave them opportunities to internalize the reasons for their decisions and actions. The intrinsic rewards stemming from students internalizing the benefits of prosocial behavior are much more effective than expecting them to respond to "external coercion" (Soloman 385).

In earlier studies, Noblit and his colleagues found the bureaucratic need for control in schools provided many limitations to the student's learning and social environment. As Clark, Jensen, Kohn, and Soloman point out, Noblit, Rogers, and McCadden found that educators' insistence on control being the main means for accomplishing goals results in the following limitations: rigid approaches to curricula; punitive disciplinary actions reducing opportunities to learn from mistakes; unhealthful competitiveness discouraging social and interpersonal acceptance; inflexible class schedules; large, impersonal class sizes; and time-consuming paperwork robbing teachers of opportunities to build relationships with their students (681).

Is the use of control and power really debilitating to creating care in the classroom? Noblit continued to investigate this question. From his years of research on the concept of power, Noblit viewed power in relation to oppression; however his more recent studies focusing on the concept of care has resulted in a shift in his previous held notion. From an ethnographic, classroom setting study called the "Care Study" conducted during the 1989-1990 academic school year, Noblit found that "caring in classrooms is not about democracy-it is about the ethical use of control and power," and that power and caring are interconnected (24-25). Caring is not necessarily "relational or reciprocal occurring in an equal relationship," as he and others previously contended, because it is the teacher's duty to take responsibility for students as they are dependent on the adult teacher for nurturing, guidance, and instruction (Noblit 26). The role of the teacher does not entail seeking this

same dependence on students because they are not adults possessing the same knowledge and power as their educators (Noblit 37). Implementing care by taking control of the classroom's atmosphere, organization, and interpersonal relationships through the practice of "moral authority" allows researchers and educators to understand how care and control are really synonymous (Noblit 26). Establishing daily rituals and routines to increase classroom organization and management, and decrease discipline problems; using humor and humanness to reflect authoritative, yet friendly confidence in the authoritative role; implementing coaching techniques to foster encouragement; responding to students' actions by praising; taking ownership of classroom and students to communicate a willingness to be unconditionally responsible for their security and success; protecting all students by conveying rules and expectations; connecting students through obligation and responsibility to one another to emphasize the importance of community rather than individuals; reducing absenteeism to provide person continuity for students; controlling curriculum by building relevancy into lessons to peak students' interest in learning; balancing personal relationships to avoid favoritism and unfairness; and practicing self-control during unplanned dialogue ("spontaneity") to avoid obstacles to the learning process are all examples of teachers caring for their students through the use of ethical control (Noblit 28-34, McLaughlin 187,194). It is difficult to imagine a classroom in which care and control are not balanced, although when this does exist, teachers lose their effectiveness and both academics and relationships suffer. McLaughlin remarks:

> The purposes and meanings of control are transformed
> by caring, and caring is transformed by control (194).

Fostering Relationships-The Administrative Role

Montgomery's research includes exploratory focus group interviews in which she examines administrators' perceptions of their role in helping create caring communities within their schools. According to the results of her interviews, she finds that school

administrators believe schools are responsible for "valuing young people and providing them with excellent opportunities to grow intellectually and socially" (Montgomery 13). Administrative response to developing interpersonal relationships in middle and secondary schools was very positive, although many of them mentioned that they personally experience difficulty in developing warm relationships with students because of the disciplinary role their position requires. Some regret the fact that their "relationships with students tend to be formal, and that usually the only time they have contact with students is when students get into trouble and are sent to their office" (Montgomery 15).

Paul G. Leonhard, a high school assistant principal, describes his personal struggles, inherent to his position, which he encounters when interacting with students. He discusses the manner in which administrators approach their students and their problems. Most administrators choose between the "bureaucratic approach," which focuses on strict adherence to policy and procedure, and the "professional approach" which is based on meaningful communication investigating causes resulting in undesirable behaviors (Leonhard 26). Although the former approach offers protection from criticism, prevents emotional stress, impedes favoritism charges, offers immunity from lawsuits, and saves time and energy, the latter approach is more effective in creating a caring administration because it creates meaningful relationships which can make a positive difference in an adolescent's life (Leonhard 26). Leonhard advocates the professional approach to administration because it ensures administrators' sensitivity in taking the necessary time and effort to explore the reasons behind the misbehavior of students which are often "attributable to factors that are not immediately evident, especially in today's society" (27). Discovering the cause of an adolescent's pain is much more humane and important than enforcing a policy found in the school handbook (Leonhard 25). Administrators must be willing to listen to student concerns, involve their parents, and communicate with teachers

in order to convey understanding and support which is usually lacking in most troublesome teenagers' lives (Leonhard 26). Sometimes it is difficult for caring administrators, who may possess confidential knowledge about the personal intricacies which negatively influence the teen's life and behavior, to dole out consequences in situations where the student's actions clearly demand disciplinary action due to possible harm to other students, or from teacher insistence. In these situations, it is important for caring professionals to seek other objective professionals, like counselors or psychologists, to assist in dealing with the adolescent's problems (Leonhard 27).

Besides being students biggest advocate by showing a willingness to listen and respond, Leonhard encourages ongoing administrative involvement in the "development of new policies and programs that will ensure as much flexibility and effectiveness as possible" (27).

Fostering Relationships-The Teacher Role

According to Comer's 1988 study consisting of interviews with secondary students enrolled in high schools with enrollment figures between 1,200 to 2,000, "the single greatest complaint they reported about their schools was, 'They [teachers] don't care!'" (Noddings, Challenge to Care 2). From this same study, Comer found that teens felt "alienated from their schoolwork, separated from the adults who try to teach them, and adrift in a world perceived as baffling and hostile" (Noddings, Challenge to Care 2). This finding is quite startling and contradictory when compared to recent studies conducted by McLaughlin which indicate that "teachers with varying levels of experience reported that caring for students was a central feature of their desire to teach" (182). Perhaps their original intentions became buried in their preoccupation with their students' academic learning, and in the process of trying to over-satisfy curriculum objectives, they unconsciously began to ignore their students' social and emotional needs (Kohn 500).

Some blame school characteristics such as size, connection to the community, and

system of governance, as well as such instructional organization characteristics as departmentalized teaching, ability grouping, normative grading, and large numbers of students assigned to teachers as factors which undermine the original motivation for both teachers and students. Both educators and researchers agree "it is difficult for teachers to maintain warm, positive relationships with students if they have to teach twenty-five to thirty different students each hour of the day" (Eccles et al. 94). Marshak's research disturbingly reports that "one of the dirty secrets of our current high schools is that quite a few high school teachers do not like adolescents" (33). Marshak defends educators who might hold this opinion by referring to them as "victims of the same structure that has helped to alienate students" (33). In her book, The Challenge to Care in Schools: An Alternative Approach to Education, Nel Noddings discusses the deplorable expectation for teachers to connect with students as class sizes continue to increase:

> Administrators assume that there must be a method that
> will allow teachers to meet 150-200 new students every
> year, and yet, establish the atmosphere of caring....People
> are not reducible to methods except , perhaps, in their work
> with objects. This form of reduction is called automation,
> and it simply does not apply for interpersonal activities (8).

Because classroom teachers cannot always control the numbers of students assigned to them, it is imperative for them to understand ways which can assist them communicate caring to their students, regardless of how many they are responsible for reaching.

To fully understand how teachers can best address their students' needs, it is paramount to consider what attributes students perceive as caring. Bosworth and her colleague, Gerald Smith, led a study team to conduct a year-long research project in two middle schools to find "indicators of caring" in adolescents (687). One school served 800 students in a large industrial city in the Midwest, and the other school served 1200 students in an urban setting, each providing a wide range of students from rural, suburban,

and inner-city environments (687). Bosworth and Smith interviewed more than one hundred sixth, seventh, and eighth graders whom teachers identified as having "caring" and "non-caring" attitudes and representating various income and ethnic backgrounds (687). According to interviewees' responses, students perceive caring teachers as those who are willing to commit to the following actions: help with schoolwork, value individuality, show respect, listen to and recognize students, display tolerance, explain class assignments, check for understanding, encourage and motivate, and plan fun activities (Bosworth 690). Eighty-one percent of all student responses also referred to indicators of teacher caring which were not necessarily academic related: help with personal problems, provide guidance for future (highest indicator for non-whites), attend extra-curricular activities, stay after school beyond hours for availability to students, demonstrate niceness and politeness, and encourage success (Bosworth 691).

High school students' perceptions were gathered by Montgomery during her interviews of a focus group. High school students believe they can form feelings of "closeness and emotional intimacy" with their teachers when teachers are willing to engage in the following: act like a "real" person, use humor, avoid a "superior" attitude, and support and respect individuality (Montgomery 15). One interesting comment, made by a student respondent, indicates she feels bonded to a band teacher by commenting, "We treat him more like a person than a teacher, but we still respect him" (Montgomery 15). Obviously, some students do not perceive teachers as people.

According to the late Dr. Hedin, who spent her professional years conducting student polls and interviews to collect data on ways to improve interpersonal relationships in schools, students need teachers to listen and respond to them in order to communicate care necessary in developing personal relationships. Hedin's research strongly supported that "the central dynamic of education is not institutional or structural, but is interpersonal" (Conrad 13).

Noddings, who also invested years researching care in the classroom, supports the legitimacy of teachers spending quality non-academic related time developing "relations of trust by listening and talking about problems that are central to adolescents' lives and guiding them toward a greater sensitivity and competence across all the domains of care" ("Teaching Themes" 679). Her studies indicate that adolescents are more willing to respond to educators whom they like and trust (36). Noddings contends that the development of trusting relationships between teachers and their students can be enhanced even further when students are allowed to stay with the same teachers for three or more years rather than the typical one year. However, she believes these placements should be made by mutual consent "to ensure trust will be built, and students will be willing to cooperate with these same teachers" (Challenge to Care 68).

In considering teacher attitudes towards building caring relationships with students, Noblit, Rogers, and McCadden find that most educators agree that "without a relationship with a teacher, a student has little reason to commit to the instructional activities required by the curriculum, and that teaching devoid of relationships with students is not a meaningful activity for teachers" (681). Educators who are willing to deliver instruction interactively by showing "enthusiasm, energy, and non-threatening traits that are apparent in their voices, facial expressions, gestures, and choice of words" are characteristic of caring, as well as an effective teacher (Langlois and Zales 45). Showing sensitivity to students' various capabilities and rates of learning and being careful not to embarrass students with less capabilities are also traits caring teachers display (Langlois and Zales 45).

Some educators perceive adolescents as being resistant to building relationships with adults; therefore, they believe it is not worth investing their time and effort establishing connections with students. Marshak disagrees with this assumption and urges adults to "re-engage teens in adult society" (32). He sees schools as ideal settings in which to

encourage adolescents in connecting with adults (32). Even though teenagers appear to prefer to surround themselves with peers instead of family members or other adults outside of the family, developmental psychologists insist that adolescents "crave adult attention and concern, particularly from adults who are not their parents" (Marshak 32). Psychologists urge adults not to "use developmental changes, like an adolescent's desire to resist adults, as an excuse not to even attempt to engage teens in adult relationships" (Marshak 32).

Another assumption teachers mistakenly make about adolescents is that their actions are strictly motivated by self-interest (egocentrism), and if they do display prosocial behavior, it is a result of a "sinister desire to make trouble," instead of value motivated (Kohn 502). From his research, Kohn finds that a teacher who adheres to the principle that adolescent egocentrism motivates everything a young person does, he or she will convey suspicion of a student displaying prosocial behaviors which will dangerously communicate an expectation of student antisocial behaviors (502).

A third teacher assumption, referred to earlier in this discussion, is the belief that students need to be punished or bribed to act responsibly. The belief that adolescents can respond to a caring environment and participate in a prosocial manner needs to be communicated to students. Referring to studies conducted at the University of Toronto, Kohn indicates that "students who view their prosocial conduct as compliance with external authority will act prosocially only when they believe external pressures are present....It is far more beneficial for students to believe that their prosocial behavior reflects values or dispositions in themselves" (502).

One cannot deny the important contributions teachers make in providing students with both an academic and moral education, even though "societies consider [the latter] to be an inappropriate or irrelevant role for the schools" to play (Soloman 383). Despite some

educators perceiving their purpose as merely to promote academic growth, they cannot

escape the reality of the moral influence their position holds. They "implicitly convey

values in their approaches to classroom governance, techniques for student motivation,

and selection of classroom goals and objectives" (Soloman 383). According to Noddings's

perspective of an ethic of caring, moral education has four major components:

1. **modeling**-showing students how to care by creating
caring relationships with them so they can
experience the rewarding emotions which
derive from being shown care.
2. **dialogue**- non-dictatorial interacting (not just spoken
words) which expedite "understanding, empathy,
and appreciation" for others.
3. **practice**- providing experiences in caring and generosity
to develop prosocial attitudes.
4. **confirmation**-meaningful, ongoing, unconditional affirmation
and encouragement to nurture student growth
(Challenge to Care 22).

Kohn focuses on modeling as being one of the most important ways that educators can

instill student prosocial behaviors:

> The extent to which a teacher expresses concern about people
> in distress and takes the initiative to help-which applies both to
> how the teacher treats the students themselves and how he or
> she refers to people outside the classroom-can set a powerful
> example and be even more effective than didactic instruction in
> promoting a sense of caring in students (503).

Kohn's research reflects that young people who witnessed, even briefly, as an adult

"donated to charity were themselves likely to donate more than others-even if months had

elapsed since the exposure to the model" (503). He asserts that students believe they are

capable of being prosocial when their teachers and other significant adult role models

"verbally attribute" such positive characteristics to them (502). This conclusion was made

after a series of experiments, conducted by Joan Grusec and her colleagues at the

University of Toronto, in which students were found to display more generosity to others when they were given verbal praise which resulted in them perceiving themselves as helpful people. Kohn found that prosocial behavior is best achieved when internalized, or intrinsically motivated (502). Building a student's view of an altruistic self is a challenge educators must willingly welcome to promote care in the classroom.

Fostering Relationships-The Student Role

"Anyone interested in children as social beings must recognize the need to attend to the interactions among them in the classroom" (Kohn 503). Kohn reiterates a point that a team of co-authors, David Johnson and Roger Johnson from the University of Minnesota, emphasize in their book, Cooperation and Competition, by stating that "the relationship between student and student is at least as important as that between student and teacher or between student and curriculum" in terms of nurturing not only successful learners but caring individuals as well (503).

Students must be allowed to participate in productive, interactive experiences for learning purposes, and to develop "a notion of belonging" (Kinsler and Joyner 177). Although middle and secondary level students have already developed an early sense of interpersonal competence (belonging) at home and during their elementary school years, opportunities to socially interact in the classroom setting allows them to refine their knowledge of "interpersonal interaction patterns" (Kinsler and Joyner 177). "Comer suggests that when a student's social skills are deemed 'appropriate' by the teacher [and peers] they elicit positive reaction," thus a bond develops. (Kinsler and Joyner 177). Conversely, if the student's behavior is socially inappropriate, oppositional relationships form which negatively affect the learning and social processes. To enhance social and relational factors in the classroom, one needs to consider the influences of care.

Interviews conducted by Bosworth and her study team revealed how students perceive

the concept of caring. Student responses represented a wide range of behaviors

associated with caring; however, Bosworth and her colleagues were able to categorize

these responses, which were dominantly relational, in the following themes:

1. **Helping**-nearly 30% viewed helping someone with schoolwork or personal problems as a caring act.
2. **Feelings**-nearly 25% mentioned having the ability to express feelings like acceptance and appreciation showed caring.
3. **Relationships**- A "sizable" percentage mentioned caring in a relational context, expressing concern for intimate others and for people outside of their immediate circle of family and friends.
4. **Values**-Some responses equated care with the following values: "respect, faithfulness, and kindness" to be held unconditionally
5. **Activities**-mentioned least often, 10% viewed caring as spending time with others by being engaged in the acts of listening and sharing. (687-688).

Bosworth found that for most nonwhite students, the concept of caring is viewed

under themes relating to relationships and activities. These students interpreted caring

through observable behaviors like sharing or spending time with another. They also

referred to specific people in their discussion on caring. More white students, on the other

hand, gave more responses under themes relating to feelings and values. Their examples

of the concept of care were less concrete as they tended to respond with emotions and

values, not behaviors. Overall, most students mentioned that caring involved helping

others. From her study team's research, Bosworth concluded that, although students gave

"complex, multidimensional definitions of caring," they do possess a "rich understanding

of what caring is," and their demonstration of understanding this concept should motivate

educators to engage them in prosocial activities that will further enrich their

comprehension and practice of caring (Bosworth 689). She is discouraged,

however, by findings reflecting that most schools offer limited opportunities allowing

students to help others. She contends that middle and secondary students receive

few chances to demonstrate their willingness to assist others due to organizational and

structural constraints. Orientation of new students, peer-tutoring, and free time are

opportunities she advocates for students; however, unsettling observations show that

experiences in helping are only offered to students possessing stronger academic skills

(Bosworth 690). Suggestions for implementing opportunities to strengthen student

interactions will be examined later in this discussion.

Fostering Relationships-Parental Involvement

In a recent survey published in Fortune magazine, eighty-nine percent of the

respondents attributed lack of family involvement as the largest barrier to school reform

(Goodman, Sutton, and Harkavy 695). This American public sentiment is also confirmed

in the most recent Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll which shows that respondents believe our

young people participate in violence because they suffer from a lack of parental

involvement and values in addition to the absence of family structure and the presence of

poverty (Elam and Rose 54). In defense of parents, however, this same survey indicates

that eighty-nine percent of all parents polled would be willing to sign a formal agreement

requiring them to cooperate with the schools by sharing the responsibility to educate their

children (Elam and Rose 41). Many believe it is the school's responsibility to encourage

parents to take an active role in their children's education. Epstein asserts that "the way

schools care about children is reflected in the way schools care about the children's family"

(Epstein 701). Teachers, who serve students in schools with a high level of parental

participation, attribute their success as an educator to the efforts of involved parents

(Montgomery 17). Epstein advocates parental involvement because of the benefits offered

to students:

> As support from school, family, and community accumulates,
> significantly more students feel secure and cared for, under-
> stand the goals of education, work to achieve their full potential,
> build positive attitudes and school behaviors, and stay in school.
> Although there is no research supporting increased academic
> achievement, the likelihood of student success is increased (703).

Government officials are beginning to see the merit of parental involvement and are including the building of partnerships between schools, families, and communities as a national goal in the policies which make up the "Goals 2000" legislation, in addition to mandating schools to participate in these partnerships to access federal, state, and local funds (Epstein 701). Policy makers, administrators, and teachers believe the formation of "family-like schools, school-like families, community-minded families, and family-minded communities working in collaboration result in caring communities" (Epstein 702). When schools recognize and appreciate a student's role as a family and community member, and parents acknowledge and support their child's role as a school and community member, the chances for overall student success increase (Epstein 702).

Epstein refers to a theoretical model involving "overlapping spheres of influence" which illustrates the interactions occurring between communities, schools, families, and, most importantly, the student (702). The "external model of the three spheres of influence" recognizes that all schools, families, and communities engage in practices separately and in combination to assist a student's development; the "internal model" focuses on the importance of interpersonal relationships between them; and at the center of these two spheres is the student who, as studies indicate, "is crucial to the success of the partnership" because it is he or she on whom everyone depends to receive information about the other (Epstein 702).

Recent research shows there is a greater need now than ever before to implement school/family/community partnerships. Epstein cites the following reasons for considering this type of collaboration:

1. Significant parental involvement decreases as
   students enter middle and high schools.
2. Families suffering from economical hardships,
   not just affluent families, need to be reached
   to make worthy contributions to their children's
   education.
3. Schools and parents need to take prideful owner-
   ship and focus on the positive accomplishments by
   sharing successes, instead of dwelling on negativity
   which seems to pervade our schools and society.
4. Non-traditional families have less time and energy to
   devote to their children, so programs need to accommo-
   date their familial situations and schedules.
5. Most families have a genuine concern for their children,
   and are eager to see them be successful.
6. Most administrators and teachers are eager to involve
   families, but do not necessarily possess the skills to
   accomplish this task.
7. Almost all students, including adolescents, desire their
   families to be more knowledgeable and involved in
   their education, but require assistance in facilitating
   these exchanges (703).

Who is responsible for creating these partnerships for the promotion of caring? Epstein finds that one person cannot undertake this project. Partnership action teams consisting of parents, educators, administrators, support staff, and community members representing a wide range of ethnic and income levels, grade levels, schools, and occupations, respectively, must be willing to combine resources to access funds from government programs and grants; gather information for assessing needs; design a minimum three year action plan; develop periodical reviews to strengthen future plans; delegate responsibilities to creatively enhance recruitment/outreach efforts, staff development, and parent workshops; and promote partnerships to gain local, private funding and interest (Epstein 708-710, Goodman, Sutton, Harkavy 695-696).

Goodman, Sutton, and Harkavy propose that "one of the more common mechanisms for bringing home and school into partnerships is the family workshop" (695). Searching

for a way to collaborate schools, families, and communities in a "mutually respectful and caring manner," they decided to create a series of family workshops in an inner-city school consisting of minority families coming from low socioeconomic backgrounds (696). Funded by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends and by a Research Program on Youth and Caring grant from the Lilly Endowment, the study team and parent volunteers invested in heavy participant recruitment strategies involving numerous mailings, telephone calls, pep talks, student reminders, formal invitations and home visits (696). Refreshments, simple decorations, and free child care were provided which proved to parents how much the school really cared about them and their children. Door prizes, tee shirts, and buttons were also provided due to generous support and donations of the business community. Students assisted with child care, greeted guests, and served refreshments. Workshop topics were selected to match those skills in which parents requested guidance. These included: "adolescent development, self-esteem, family communication, peer pressure, sexuality, substance abuse, and behavior management" (695). Workshops were offered on Saturday mornings as preferred by parents.

The workshops were based on three instructional models "as conceptualized by Lawrence Kohlberg" and his colleagues: directive, nondirective, and cooperative problem solving" (Goodman, Sutton, and Harkavy 697). The first approach involved direct lecturing, the second approach involved participant discussion, and the third approach incorporated both participant discussion and facilitator input, and was the best received by parents. Adolescents were also allowed to participate with their parents.

These researchers were very pleased with the outcomes of their family workshop study. Attendance figures were record-breaking in comparison to previous attempts in getting families involved. "Forty family members participated in at least four weeks of the six week project" (698). "93% of the participants reported this experience as being "very

helpful," and they expressed appreciation of the ideas and suggestions they received, the

willingness of others' to openly and honestly participate, and for the opportunity to learn

they were not alone in their struggle with adolescent issues. Parents also showed

appreciation for the incentives offered and the school's effort to care and respect them.

They all expressed an interest in continuing to meet after the family workshop series

ended. Adolescents also reported new, positive attitudes towards their parents when they

attended the workshops.(698-699).

Although the family workshop series was a tremendous success, Epstein cautions the

following:

> Although interactions of educators, parents, students,
> and community members will not always be smooth or
> successful, partnership programs establish a base of
> respect and trust on which to build. Good partnerships
> withstand questions, conflicts, debates, and disagree-
> ments; provide structures and processes to solve problems;
> and are mentioned-even strengthened-after differences have
> been resolved. Without this firm base, disagreements and
> problems that are sure to arise about schools and students
> will be harder to solve (703).

Overall, most researchers agree that partnerships "improve school programs and

climate, provide family services and support, increase parents' skills and leadership,

connect families with the school and community, help teachers connect with students, and

help young people to succeed" (Epstein 701).

Care and Academic Achievement

Findings of the influences of care on students' academic achievement vary. As noted

earlier, Epstein refers to no direct correlation between collaboration for caring purposes

and student academic achievement, but his studies do support that "students' chances for

success are increased" (703). On the other hand, Goodman and her colleagues research

results point to definite "improvements" in adolescent academic growth when caring

communities are nurtured in schools (695). Conrad and Noddings strongly discourage

educators from trivializing the impact caring has on students' academic endeavors, and urge them not to consider caring as "a nice social ideal" or "anti-intellectual" (14,"Teaching Themes" 676).

Results from an observational study conducted by Noblit and his colleagues during the 1989-1990 academic year showed interpersonal relationships existing between teachers and students play a significant role in both the social and academic development of students (681). Teachers participating in the study indicated that "without a relationship with a teacher, a student has little reason to commit to the instructional activities required" (681). Noblit, Roger, and McCadden's observations and interviews supported their following contention:

> The focal point around which teaching should be organized is not the instrumental but the relational. Without this connection, a teacher may have technical ability, but the opportunity for learning will be scarce because what the teacher doesn't have is the student (683).

One of the most important ways teachers can enhance a student's opportunity for academic success is by using praise which shows response and recognition to academic accomplishment, communicates a belief in the student's ability to be responsible, and provides feedback allowing a student to "correct or enhance" their efforts (Langlois and Zales 46, Kohn 502). When teachers direct severe criticism towards a student's academic effort, academic performance will decrease due to the effects of "decreased motivation" which also "erodes on the child's self-esteem as it related to academic accomplishments" (Kinsler and Joyner 177). In addition to using praise, teachers show they care by recognizing and making accommodations for the disparities between their students' individual learning styles and cognitive abilities resulting in increased opportunities for learning to occur (Kinsler and Joyner 175).

Schools that offer organizational structures providing academic support through the inclusion of cooperation and continuity between different school levels residing in the same school districts have been investigated by some researchers. Newberg attempts to convince educators and administrators to consider "creating safety nets" to ease the transition of moving from one building to another in the progression of grade levels- a time when adolescents are most socially and academically vulnerable to their new environments (713). Maintaining contact for academic updates with the same students for continuous years, improving communication and planning for consistency in teacher expectations among educators across all levels, building continuity in content and managerial approaches, exchanging important information pertinent to the student's previous academic and social experiences, and increasing interdependency among educators to promote a "collective sense of responsibility for student learning" are necessary components in linking separate schools within the same system and improving students' social and academic progression (Newberg 714-716). Newberg's research of several school systems in which these suggestions were followed show that separate school levels can become unified through the following: regularly scheduled vertical workshops/in-services, interschool visits with other teams of teachers and their classrooms, willingness to share both human and instructional resources, assignment of ongoing projects which follow students from one year to the next, student input about their education in previous years and expectations about their following school years, and feeder-pattern research and awareness (714-717).

One of the studies, called "Bridging the Gap" taking place at Bartram Senior High School and feeder middle schools, set out to create a "community of schools" to improve student academic achievement through increased personnel communications by following the suggestions previously listed. Newberg reports that the "Bartram cluster imagined

itself as one school within twelve sites" benefiting both teacher and student relationships and performance. (717).

It is important to note that the increases in academic achievement, to which many researchers refer, are supported by higher tests scores related to reading comprehension (Soloman 391, Noblit, Rogers, and McCadden 681-682). Some researchers vacillate between improved reading capabilities being the cause of improved academic performance, or the ongoing positive impact ethical caring has on self-esteem and self-confidence which motivate the student to more seriously engage in classroom tasks (Noblit, Rogers, and McCadden 681-682). Others do not feel the decision to continue practicing ethical care to provide student supports should be determined by test scores, as care should be shown to students no matter what their grades reflect! (Noddings, "Teaching Themes" 679).

Care and Curriculum Integration

Teaching children subject content and teaching children to value themselves and others should not be viewed as separate undertakings. There are many ways to incorporate the concept of care in existing curricula. These include: allowing students to work cooperatively, implementing interdisciplinary teams, considering multiple intelligences when assessing students, addressing multicultural education, utilizing themes of care, and reading and discussing literature across all content areas. One must keep in mind that teaching children to care should not be misconstrued as morality teaching. Kohn differentiates between these two approaches by clarifying that schools should not develop a curriculum based on value or moral indoctrination that dogmatically instructs students in the proper way to behave and live their lives. He refers to the words of Martin Buber, a philosopher who in his 1939 address to teachers proclaimed, "Education worthy of the name is essentially education of character" (497). Kohn interprets Buber's message to be

encouragement for educators to take responsibility to create "good people" in the process of creating "good learners" which is needed now more than ever in our society (497-498).

An increasing number of educators are acknowledging the benefits of using cooperative learning in the classroom. Cooperative learning enhances students' abilities to cooperate with others resulting in strong human connections caused by "interdependence" on others (Kohn 504). Kohn's research indicates that many studies find that this approach "has the potential to help students to feel good about themselves, feel good about each other, feel good about what they are learning, and learn more effectively" due to the elimination of competition and isolation in the learning process (503-504). Cooperative learning is often used to increase academic achievement; however, many educators do not realize the advantages it offers in the practice of prosocial activity. It offers students the following prosocial benefits: a sense of group identity, a greater tolerance for differing others, an appreciation for others' point of views, an invitation to productively participate and interact with peers, and an opportunity to develop a sense of trust in others (Kohn 503). It can be implemented to develop adolescents' "autonomy and democratic decision-making " in the classroom by allowing them to collaborate for classroom planning concerning input on classroom rules, procedures, problem-solving, and activities (Kohn 503).

When working towards transforming schools into caring communities, administrators and educators need to consider organizing classes into interdisciplinary teams. Unlike the impersonal approach which departmentalization is known to provide, team teaching improves teacher/teacher, teacher/student, teacher/parents, and student/student interpersonal relationships. Caring is communicated through coordination of instruction across subject areas, earlier recognition and intervention of student barriers to both social and academic barriers, unity of students through a team approach to social and academic

activities, flexibility of block scheduling, identification and support from group concept, and improvement in communication with parents (Whisler 20). Both practice and research show interdisciplinary teams should be implemented at both the middle and high school levels because students are introduced to academic content in a "natural, interrelated, mutually dependent" approach which is more effective than the fragmented manner which departmentalization presents (Jett, Pulling, and Ross 88-89).

Another suggestion for creating a caring community within schools involves the appreciation and inclusion of acknowledging students' various capacities and individual needs. Noddings criticizes the standard liberal arts education, which mostly values intellectual capacities in linguistic and logical-mathematical domains, being taught in middle and high schools across the country, and she advocates curricula that equally values additional intellectual capacities (Challenge to Care 30-31). She urges schools to offer variety in their curricula and assessment tools in recognition of the seven intelligences theorized by Howard Gardner. In addition to verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical, these multiple capacities include: musical, spatial-visual, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Appreciating these different areas of strength and offering students a chance to excel in them will prevent their feelings of "inferiority, rejection, boredom, and hostility" which result when their non-traditional capacities are ignored (Noddings, Challenge to Care 31).

Another approach to be considered for constructing caring and constructive relations in middle and high schools is the incorporation of multicultural education. During the adolescence stage of human development, students' physical and cognitive capacities increase resulting in their ability to critique "racial, gender, and other biases in their school environment and in society" (Montgomery 5). Studies show that when students transition from small, socially and racially homogeneous neighborhood schools to heterogeneous middle and high schools, they tend to experience discomfort from unfamiliarity with

various ethnic and cultural disparities. Often students cope with their feelings of discomfort by "avoiding or separating themselves from inter-ethnic relationships and behavioral patterns associated with ethnic groups" (Montgomery 5). Including experiences, belief systems, and cultural values and activities of diverse ethnic groups in the curriculum allows all students to identify similarities between their own culture and others and promotes recognition, appreciation, and tolerance for differences which they encounter during their interactions with others. In fostering caring, however, some student "self-segregation" should not be discouraged because this is a "natural means for them to experience community on campus" in which they can identify and celebrate differences which are unique to their ethnic background (Montgomery 16). Respecting this kind of group separation is considered beneficial to students, according to information gathered from interviews with both teachers and students (Montgomery 16).

Creating themes of care into curriculum that expose students to "rich vocabulary and experiences" communicating caring concepts is another method which needs to be used by educators (Noddings, "Teaching Themes" 675). Noddings encourages teachers of all content areas to creatively incorporate the following themes into their subject areas:

1. Care for self
2. Care for intimate others
3. Care for associates and acquaintances
4. Care for distant others
5. Care for non-humans and animals
6. Care for plants and the physical environment
7. Care for the human-made world of objects and instruments
8. Care for ideas ("Teaching Themes" 675).

Planning for incorporation of these themes is best expedited by interdisciplinary teams of teachers; however, since teams do not usually exist in high schools, themes can be organized into curriculum by willing individual teachers working collaboratively with others in their content area departments. The benefits of including themes of care in the

curriculum include the following: inspires further study in particular areas, provides subject area connections, connects students and subjects through "great existential questions," and builds teacher/student relationships encouraging students to become more engaged in the classroom (Noddings, "Teaching Themes" 676). Noddings argues that it is "morally irresponsible" to simply ignore existential questions and themes of care in the classroom, but it is equally irresponsible to approach these deep concerns regarding existence and responsibility of choice without caution and careful preparation, especially when working with "vulnerable" adolescents ("Teaching Themes" 677). Educators need to encourage student discussions on caring, however, they must be prepared to ethically respond to situations in which students wish to "make disclosures which they may later regret" by helping them make wise decisions about the information they wish to share about themselves, their beliefs, and their experiences ("Teaching Themes" 677). Consequently, teachers also need to practice caution about sharing some of their personal opinions relating to existential issues which may arise in classroom discussions.

In trying to promote prosocial behaviors and values in students, educators must rely on the contributions literature has to offer. As we enter the 21st century, pragmatists argue that "important reading matter of the future will be information," and that educators need to emphasize reading skills which focus on "information-gathering and information-processing" since literature does not prepare students for future, gainful employment (Gillespie 16). Gillespie and Soloman strongly disagree with this pragmatic view by supporting the use of literature in all content areas in school curricula. Soloman advocates the use of literature by stating:

> [Literature] allows students opportunities to explore
> values in supportive and unthreatening situations, to
> develop their abilities and inclinations to understand
> the thoughts, feelings, needs, and motives of others,
> and to build feelings of empathy and identification with
> people outside of their immediate group and setting (387).

Gillespie's arguments for the use of literature to promote prosocial behavior and a strong work ethic are based on its capacity to allow students to envision lives beyond their own which, in many cases, "breeds optimism and inspiration" for their future (17). Gillespie illustrates this point by referring to a speech given by an editor, Walter Anderson, at the 1993 International Reading Association conference. Anderson, who suffered from a "violent and impoverished" childhood, commented on the consoling effects literature offered him as a child:

> I could open a book, and I could be anything. I could be anywhere. I could be anyone. I read myself out of poverty long before I worked myself out of poverty (Gillespie 17).

Gillespie also argues for literature because it "converges with life in the field of human relationships" (21). He challenges educators to focus more on character motivations and interactions rather than the "technical" literary elements traditionally occupying the majority of literature discussions and writing assignments (19). Through in-depth exploration of human (character) experiences, students are allowed to consider the "social values and ethical dilemmas" which they can relate to their own lives. Their ability to care and to feel emotion from the impact of a literary character's experiences and destiny is referred to as "empathetic imagination" or "moral imagination" which offers a safe, nondidactic approach in learning about prosocial lessons, thus students are more likely to apply these values to their own interpersonal relationships (Gillespie 18-20).

Caring Programs

In addition to implementing curriculum approaches which promote prosocial values, schools can also serve students by investing their resources in programs resulting in caring communities. Developing supportive assistance through transitional and student

mentoring programs, alternative approaches to discipline, exploratory classes, service projects, and advisor/advisee programs offer students practice in refining their prosocial skills. These cost-effective programs contribute significantly to the affective realm necessary in supporting students socio-emotional needs and interpersonal relationships with others (Testerman 365).

Because adolescence is considered an uproarious stage in human development, all adolescents can be considered at risk emotionally, socially, physically, and academically. Their state of vulnerability is further enhanced when they are required to make transitions from elementary to middle schools, and middle schools to high schools. They are forced to endure a frightening adjustment to an unfamiliar environment inundating them with strange, new faces and ambiguous expectations. Caring administrators and teachers anticipate these fears and commit to easing transitions for students by offering more than just the traditional, obligatory building and program orientation meeting. Many researchers have come up with several suggestions for schools to follow to provide a "seamless" transition particularly for students entering high school; however, this investigator finds these to be applicable to young adolescent students going to middle school as well. These include: sharing middle level and high school buildings, teachers, and preparation time allowing for productive communication, allowing students several visits to future school sites during the school day, organizing students into interdisciplinary teams, including advisory/advisee programs in the school day, assigning upperclassmen as mentors for young students, providing flexibility in grouping students for instruction, offering non-competitive activities and sports, structuring activities which are age appropriate, and encouraging parental involvement (Jett, Pulling, and Ross 86-87, Whisler 27).

Kohn and Noddings strongly advocate student mentoring to ease transitions for new students, in addition to creating interschool relationships between adolescents and elementary level students. They support their contention by citing that mentoring relationships distract adolescents from the self-absorption they commonly experience during this period, allow them to reap the intrinsic rewards of helping others, review and reinforce educational concepts by teaching them to others, and promote a commitment to the welfare of children (Kohn 504-505, Noddings, Challenge to Care, 104-105). Kohn states the necessity of implementing mentoring programs:

> Educators can provide students with opportunities to be responsible for one another so they will learn [prosocial values and skills] by doing. This can include interaction with those of different ages. For an older child to guide someone younger is to experience firsthand what it is to be a helper and to be responsible for someone who is dependent on him or her. For the younger child, this cross-age interaction presents an opportunity to see a prosocial model who is not an adult (504-505).

Alternative approaches to discipline must be considered in the classroom to humanely guide and empower young people. Through the use of developmental discipline approaches, adolescents should be invited to participate in making decisions regarding building and classroom policies and provide input for addressing school problems by scheduling periodic meetings (Soloman 386). By encouraging student involvement, adults communicate their belief in student responsibility and competence. Adalbjarnardottir advocates teaching students to solve their social conflict through conflict resolution. He discovered the benefits of resolving problems through this approach after organizing a special intervention program study investigating the results of conflict resolution on students' "social and cognitive competence and skills" (398-400). He found the need for instituting this developmental approach in schools due to teachers' unwillingness to

become involved in their students' social conflicts, to avoid unfair practices in dealing with students who display socially inappropriate behaviors, to use reasoning power in problem-solving, and to prepare students to practice perspective-taking when problems arise in social interactions occurring both inside and outside of the school environment. Based on Piaget and Dewey's developmental theories, Adalbjarnardottir and his colleagues created the INS model in 1989 which provides an understanding of the various reasoning levels necessary in nurturing interpersonal negotiations for teaching conflict resolution (402-404). After familiarizing educators with this model and having them teach social conflict strategies to their students, they quickly identified that hasty teacher interventions were not necessary because students were capable of handling most conflicts themselves. Post-training observations included students' willingness to "stop, think, and calmly express their feelings" when conflicts occurred. Teachers reported increases in student tolerance, empathy, and altruism (400,408). Adalbjarnardottir maintains that this approach cannot be effective unless teachers are willing to surrender control, allocate the necessary time for providing training and consistency, and display the necessary enthusiasm to convince students this is the way in which problems need to be solved (408-410).

Whisler discusses the importance of caring for students by offering exploratory classes which invite students to develop their personal interests which are not related to the regular academic course offerings (26). Mini-courses focusing on various high-interest topics targeted for the adolescent ages challenge students to "experience new categories of skills and knowledge to pursue special interests" (26). Whisler recommends that these "brief, but intense interest-based activities" should be creatively designed to consume not more than fifteen to twenty minutes of the daily school schedule (26).

Schools should also design community service projects to nurture prosocial behaviors in students. Research conducted by Staub shows that students benefit from "engaging in

prosocial activity, especially helping others" (Solomon 387). However, simply organizing "food drives, neighborhood clean-ups, school-wide buddy programs, etc.," will not promote caring unless these activities are combined with teacher led discussions reinforcing the values behind these actions (Bosworth 693). To be most effective, students should be given the responsibility of organizing the service project, and teachers should take responsibility for ensuring the project does not develop into a competitive event causing students to lose sight of its intended purpose (Bosworth 693).

To provide socio-emotional support to young adolescents' healthful development and academic success, schools need to seriously consider advisor/advisee programs. These programs provide opportunities for interactions that result in "increased self-awareness, the consideration of values, and the development of understandings needed to deal with various school, home, or peer-related problems" (Whisler 25). Robinson believes adviser/advisee programs nurture a student's sense of belonging by connecting them to others and fostering their relationship with one significant school community adult (does not have to be a teacher) who knows them well and displays care and trust for the student. Goal setting, study skills, decision-making, developing trust, perspective taking, conflict resolution, peer pressure issues, time and organizational management, critical thinking, cooperation, and interdependence on others are also skills which are addressed by this small group concept (Robinson 3). A twenty-one week study at Lely High School in Naples, Florida showed advisor/advisee groups resulted in increases or improvements in attendance, study habits, attitudes, self concept assessment scores, and emotional well-being (Testerman 365).

School counselors must be willing to assist school community adults by helping them understand their role as advisor and by providing academic and social related data upon request to help advisors measure the effect they have on their advisees. Noddings suggests being prepared to address sensitive, spontaneous events occurring in students'

lives both inside and outside of schools. In comparing advisors with school counselors, she believes the former are equally qualified to provide the necessary compassion in dealing with delicate situations due to the trust and continuity they and their advisees share ("Teaching Themes," 678). Testerman, on the other hand, contends that most advisors discuss academic-related concerns with advisees and feel no need to discuss a student's personal life in order to develop a caring relationship. He maintains that "avenues for psychological referral should be clearly spelled out before the advisement sessions ever begin" (365). Noddings strongly discourages this dependency on school counselors by insisting that advisors "do not need degrees in counseling to advise students on the usual academic and personal problems" (Challenge to Care, 69).

Schools and Social Service Collaboration

According to the 1995 Phi Delta Kappa/Gallup Poll of the Public Attitudes Toward the Public School, ninety-one percent of the people polled believed public schools need to take responsibility for "serving the emotional and health needs of students." Even though services such as vision and hearing examinations, free or low-cost lunches, immunization clinics, and latchkey care for students overwhelm taxpayers, only three percent of the total sample group viewed these roles for the schools as "unimportant" (Elam and Rose 44). In addition, data gathered from the 1990 U.S. Bureau of the Census indicate that of "all children born in 1983, fifty percent will live with only one parent before the year 2001, fifty-four percent of African-American children live with single mothers, forty percent of all people living in poverty are children, and twenty-five percent of all homeless people are children" (Orlich 359). This is just a small sample of the list of infinite causes which rob students of a natural, healthful development. McChesney echoes the need for recognizing those factors which victimize young people:

> Everyday children bring with them to school a myriad
> of problems arising from unmet physical, emotional,
> and social needs. Hunger, abuse, and unhappiness

prevent these children from taking advantage of
educational opportunities (3).

40

Even though social services exist, they are often too difficult for families to access due to fragmentation, location, and eligibility barriers created by bureaucratic constraints. The establishment of more programs to meet the needs of those who are not being served continues to be prevented by barriers such as "funding, turf considerations, effective delivery systems, involvement of stakeholders, and the challenge of bureaucratic stagnation" (McChesney 1). Therefore, the public schools have now "evolved as the institution not only to educate but to address the social , welfare, and economic ills of our society" (Orlich 360). Schools and social service agencies are beginning to recognize the necessity of becoming "family friendly" by considering the needs and realities of family life in the 1990's. Various terms, such as "school-based service," "community school," "school linked services," "school-social service collaboration," and "interagency communication" are being used to describe these unions taking place between schools and community resources (McChesney 2, Epstein 702).

To effectively serve students and their families, school-social service collaborations need to examine the following criteria:

1. Participating agencies need to improve delivery of services to children and families and improve inter-agency communications.
2. Planning and implementation of programs should not be dominated by one of the participating groups (schools, health organizations, or social service agencies).
3. Programs should be comprehensive and tailored to meet the needs of individual students and their families.
4. Each participating agency should direct some of its current funding to support collaboration.
5. Programs should involve and support parents.
6. Agencies should provide data about what they attempt to accomplish, what they achieve, and at what cost.
7. School-social service collaborations should be responsive to the diversity of student and families. (McChesney 2).

To examine different types of programs offered and their impact on at risk students, a study of school linked services offered in the state of West Virginia was conducted by concerned school personnel and the West Virginia Education Association (McChesney 3). Data collected in this study show that a wide range of services are offered benefiting both students and their families. Providing programs offering assistance with issues, such as "academic failure, after-school care, child abuse and neglect, counseling, drop-out prevention, family support, health and basic needs, life skills, parenting skills, adult education, preschool, self-esteem, substance abuse prevention and recovery, and teen parenting," are made possible by researching and approaching funding sources, submitting grant proposals, and persistently following-up with all interested funding sources. (McChesney 3). The study found that most financial support for programs are received from " local businesses and professionals, foundation grants, state and federal funds, health and social service agencies, and the National Education Association" (McChesney 3). Results from the study indicate that individuals, families, schools, and communities all benefit from "whole village involvement" in helping make progress in the lives of children (McChesney 3).

Earlier in this decade, school-social service collaboration quickly gained support from representatives in both major political parties as the democratic governor of Florida claimed:

> I look forward to the time when we keep schools open to
> 10 o'clock every night, have students going twelve months
> a year, make them a place where poor families can pick up
> foodstamps and their food...and their AFDC checks, and
> where they can sign up for job training (McChesney 1).

Republican Governor Pete Wilson of California also showed his support for school-based programs by signing an executive order which created the cabinet-level position of

"Secretary of Child Development and Education" and mandated recommendations regarding the "integration of social, health, and support services in the schools" (McChesney 1). There continues to be widespread support for social services in the public school systems from both political leaders and the American public.

Conclusions

Societal upheavals presenting unprecedented challenges to adolescents and their families are demanding schools to provide a safe, caring environment for their students. Administrators and educators demonstrating commitment in transforming their campuses and classrooms into caring communities by implementing both effective and affective organizational restructuring, curricular and instructional strategies, classroom management approaches, interpersonal relationship guidance, and programs providing awareness and practice of prosocial values communicate a genuine concern for adolescent development which includes but also transcends an academic focus.

Adolescence presents developmental challenges resulting in rapid, critical changes occurring within young people and their environments and causing all adolescents to experience susceptibility to those factors which pose risks to their emotional, social, psychological, and cognitive growth processes. It is necessary for educators to be emotionally supportive of their adolescent students by taking responsibility to recognize and respond to their unique needs which contributes to students' chances of reaching their full potential in their educational endeavors and personal live encounters.

Caring for students includes reaching out to involve their families and addressing their problems resulting from economic and social barriers. Educators must be willing to create partnerships with families and communities to develop strategies that assist them in helping students become confident, productive, and caring adults.

It is this investigator's hope that the following findings encourage educators to seriously

consider their professional purpose and the manner and direction in which they guide

students. These various findings include:

-Historical, societal, familial, and economical changes have robbed an increasing number
 of adolescents of their support systems and role models.
-Students' interpersonal relationship skills, self-concepts, and feelings of being cared for
 are suffering because of these changes.
-Schools are ideal settings to address the promotion of self-worth and prosocial values.
-School reform needs to consider the importance of affective and interpersonal
 domains to improve education.
-Class sizes continue to get larger decreasing the likelihood for trusting relationships
 between teachers/students and students/students. Class numbers should be decreased.
-Numerous teenagers have feelings of alienation from adults and their peers.
-Technological advances have made our world impersonal.
-Communities are less connected to their schools and families.
-All adolescents are considered at risk due to the unique developmental changes
 characteristic of this stage.
-Secondary and middle school must provide environments and activities that are
 accommodating to an adolescent's social, emotional, and cognitive development.
-Educators must empower students by encouraging autonomy through decision-making
 and problem-solving of classroom policies, procedures, and activities.
-Competitiveness, ability grouping, and large group activities should be avoided.
-Instruction and assessment methods should accommodate different learning styles and
 intelligences.
-Various cultural and ethnic differences must be respected, and multicultural education
 should be included in the curriculum.
-Prosocial behavior and values must be modeled, not preached.
-High expectations of students communicate a belief in their competence.
-Opinions vary according to the effect caring has on academic achievement. Some believe
 that only chances of higher performance is increased; others believe caring definitely
 increases academic performance.
-The use of teacher power/control must be balanced with care. When one is used without
 the other, the teacher is no longer effective.
-Extrinsic manipulation, like punishment, bribery, and rewards, do not increase prosocial
 behaviors-underlying values must be internalized.
-Administrators relate better with students when they take the time to listen and
 interact with them in a meaningful manner.
-Students perceive worthy teachers as those who respect, listen to, and engage in genuine,
meaningful interactions with them. Command of subject material is not a consideration

when students evaluate the quality of a teacher.

-Students respond more to teachers whom they trust.

-Continuity of the same teachers for multiple years enhances teacher/student relationships.

-Teenagers seek adult attention even if they appear otherwise.

-Students must be allowed opportunities to practice prosocial behaviors through peer-tutoring, mentoring, cooperative learning, conflict resolution, service projects, and advisory groups.

-Adolescents must feel a sense of identity and a feeling of belonging to their environment.

-Adolescents understand what care is.

-Schools must form partnerships with parents and communities by implementing aggressive outreach strategies.

-Caring strategies must be implemented to ease transitions to new schools.

-Interdisciplinary team teaching provides students with identity, security, and relational and academic connections. It promotes overall improved communication.

-Teachers should incorporate themes of care in their content areas.

-Literature should be used to promote student prosocial behavior and values.

-Schools, social service agencies, and mental and medical health teams should collaborate to meet the needs of families and their children. The majority of the American public supports this union.

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